

Town Council Meeting: 11 January 2010



Town of Garrett Park
PO Box 84
4600 Waverly Avenue
Garrett Park, MD 20896

Regular Meeting of Town Council
Garrett Park Town Hall
10814 Kenilworth Avenue
Garrett Park, MD 20896

MINUTES

Call to Order: Mayor Keller called the meeting to order at 8:00 PM. Present were Councilmembers Irons, Mandel, Petito, Schulp, and Wegner. Also present were Administrator Pratt, Margaret Soltan of the *Bugle*, Tara Flynn from the Garrett Park Cooperative Nursery School (Nursery School), and residents Henri Keller and Charlie Snyder.

Approval of Agenda: Mayor Keller asked for approval of the agenda as posted with consideration of the minutes of the 11/09/2009 Executive Session and of the 11/18/2009 Special Meeting deferred to a later date. The revised agenda was approved without objection.

Presentations by Residents:

- Henri Keller announced that the January Film Society movie offering was *Volver*, a film by Pedro Almodovar, and was to be screened Friday, January 15th at the Town Hall.
- Tara Flynn reported that the Nursery School filed its Bond Bill application for a \$200,000 grant from the state and would send a copy of the application to the Mayor. Ms. Flynn noted the support from Senator Forehand and the District 17 Delegation. Mayor Keller commented that it was now time to reach out to the delegations from other districts served by the Nursery School to build support.

Mayor's Report:

- Mayor Keller updated the Council on the progress of the transfer of the Community Center from the Montgomery County Parks Department (MCPD) to the Town, noting that there were three somewhat overlapping areas of activity:
 - o Finance: This was primarily the responsibility of the Nursery School. As reported by Tara Flynn, the Nursery School was actively raising funds and pursuing a state grant. The intent is for the Nursery School to absorb all costs regarding renovation and operation of the Community Center. The Town would have some expense in preparation for the transfer of the property, the McLeod assessment undertaken in July, and some legal expenses to resolve issues with the deed, as described next.
 - o Transfer of Property: There were a number of issues that primarily arise out of covenants in the 1948 deed of the property to the Parks Department by the Board of Education, that if not dealt with properly could cloud the deed the Town would receive from the

Parks Department. The Parks Department was aware of this, a meeting is scheduled for January 20th to iron out the problem, and the Parks Department is being cooperative. An acceptable result is expected, but prudence requires sound legal advice, so the town has retained the firm of Kaplan Kirsch & Rockwell. Town Attorney (David Podolsky has a potential conflict, having done title work for the Parks Department.)

- The mcpd will take a look at the reverter clause as presently drafted to try to accommodate our request that the town of Garrett park be able to trigger a reversion of the property to mcpd if it wished to.
- Lease: Council members Petito and Schulp are the Council's representatives for this aspect of the matter, and they are planning to meet next week to prepare for discussions with the Nursery School regarding the lease for the Community Center.
- The Mayor reported on the upcoming Maryland Municipal League (MML) Montgomery County Chapter meeting in Tacoma Park on Thursday, January 21st. He urged Councilmembers to attend as the important matter of a proposed street light electrical service rate hike by Pepco would be a primary topic of discussion. A proposed increase of as much as 70% for some types of street lights, types the Town owns, has been applied for.
- Regarding the White Flint Development Project, the Mayor reminded the Council of the discussion at the December with John King regarding approaching the consultant, a Mr. Watkins, who White Flint Estates had used during its negotiations with the White Flint Partnership. There was a brief discussion about the timing of meetings with Councilmember Mandel and the history of Strathmore Avenue traffic studies with resident Charlie Snyder. Mayor Keller said that he would set a meeting with Mr. Watkins as soon as possible and would report back to the Council on the outcome of that discussion.

Councilmember's Reports on Areas of Responsibility:

- Councilmember Irons reminded the Council that the next Land Use Task Force meeting would be at 8:00 PM on Thursday, January 28th.
- Councilmember Schulp reported that he had had discussions with members of the Garrett Park Elementary School PTA and that there was great concern about probable cuts to school programs due to the ongoing budget crises at Montgomery County.
- Councilmember Mandel complimented the Maintenance Department on its effective response to the recent snowstorms, with other Councilmembers and the Mayor concurring.

Approval of Minutes: Councilmember Wegner **MOVED**

That the minutes of the 12/14/2009 Regular Council Meeting be approved as distributed. Councilmember Schulp seconded the motion, which was **PASSED** unanimously.

Action/Discussion:

- Discussion of Amendments to the FY 2009 Budget- Mayor Keller reviewed the draft of proposed changes to the FY 2010 budget with the Council,

noting that it was his intention to seek introduction of the necessary ordinance at the February meeting, giving Councilmembers time to review the proposals. There was extended discussion regarding the proposed changes. Mayor Keller then asked Administrator Pratt to discuss the proposal to replace the 1993 Chevrolet pickup truck. Administrator Pratt noted that the full extent of the problems with this truck had only become known Friday and he referred the Council to the memo that had been sent to them earlier in the day (attached to these minutes). There was extended discussion regarding the need to purchase a new truck, its type and intended uses. Council members learned that: A) The current truck has been in use for 17 years and is living on borrowed time; the town had recently received an estimate of \$6,000 for necessary repairs, including essential items, such as worn ball joints. The repairs didn't include fixing the holes in the cab floor. B) Electric vehicles are not robust enough to meet the requirements for a replacement, including heavy-duty hauling and snow removal. C) Hybrids are available, but are not time-tested over the estimated 20 year life we expect out of the new truck. Currently, hybrid batteries last up to 10 years under non-stress conditions. Replacing such a battery might cost another \$20,000. D) Diesels are also considerably more expensive to buy (\$6,000). E) The town is able to buy the new vehicle under a state program that saves about 25% off the sticker price. Administrator Pratt noted that there was a 60 to 90 day delivery time, and asked for permission to issue a purchase order in anticipation of adoption of the proposed changes to the current budget so that the truck would be available in April. After brief discussion, Councilmember Mandel **MOVED**

That the Town Administrator issue a purchase order for a new truck as described in the memo circulated to the Council. Councilmember Irons seconded the motion, which **PASSED** unanimously.

Town Administrator Report:

- Monthly Financial Report - Administrator Pratt reviewed the monthly financial report with the Council.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:37 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

[TOWN SEAL]

Edwin Pratt, Jr., Clerk-Treasurer



Town Office

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MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor & Council
From: Ted Pratt
Re: Replacement Pickup Truck
Date: 11 January 2010

The 1993 Chevrolet Pickup has reached the end of its useful service life. After an inspection by Carlos Automotive in Kensington, it appears that over \$6,000 worth of work is needed to put the truck back into a safe operating condition. It needs:

- New water pump, radiator and all hoses & belts
- New steering tie rods, ball joints, pitman & idler arms
- Front brake calipers, Rear brake pads, new brake lines & hoses
- Rear axle seals
- New exhaust system
- 4 new tires and alignment

There is significant rust in the cab, including a hole in the floor.

This truck has provided excellent service, and up to this point has been worth investing in significant repairs to the engine and transmission. Now that we are facing major deterioration in running gear, cab and chassis, it is no longer reasonable to put more money into this truck.

Butch and I recommend we replace it with a new one-ton pickup available to the Town through the state bid, as follows:

2010 Ford F350 4x4 V8 4-auto standard pickup truck	\$21,750
w/Running Boards, Cab Marker Lights, Power Group	
Snow Plow	5,000
Bed dump kit (self-installed)	3,750
	<u>\$30,400</u>

I would ask for a \$30,000 appropriation (This is \$5,000 less than the FY 2008 budget appropriation).